



**PARLIAMENT**  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**THE SPEAKER**

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Ms DE Dlakude, MP

Chairperson: Subcommittee on Review of Assembly Rules

National Assembly

Republic of South Africa

Cape Town 8000

Dear Ms Dlakude,

**Referral of matters to the Subcommittee on Review of Assembly Rules**

There are several matters that require the consideration of the National Assembly Rules Committee (the Rules Committee).

Assembly Rule 158(2)(b) empowers the Speaker, as the Chairperson of the Rules Committee, to take any steps necessary for the Rules Committee to conduct its business. In this regard, I refer the following matters to the Subcommittee on Review of Assembly Rules (the Subcommittee) for consideration and report to the Rules Committee. A brief summary of each matter is provided.

**Amendment of Rules for Virtual Sitings**

On 9 June 2020, the National Assembly adopted rules for "Virtual Meetings". These rules allowed the House and its committees to meet using online platforms. Since then, however, the Assembly has adopted a "hybrid" system, where some members are present in the Chamber and others online. The existing rules have since been used for "hybrid" meetings, but the rules may need to be updated to specify that they also apply to these type of proceedings.

**Displaying placards in the House**

On 30 March 2022, the Chief Whips' Forum, pursuant to an incident in the House when a member displayed a placard, proposed that the Rules Committee consider guidelines relating to members displaying placards as well as other objects in the House and, in the case of online proceedings, the use of different backgrounds. The Chief Whips' Forum requested that such guidelines should be considered a priority.

### **Referral of Principle of Ruling**

On 16 March 2022, the Chief Whip of the Democratic Alliance, Ms NWA Mazzone, wrote to the Speaker to request that I refer a ruling given by the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Energy and Mineral Resources, Mr S Luzipo, when the Portfolio Committee met on 8 March 2022, to the Rules Committee (as attached).

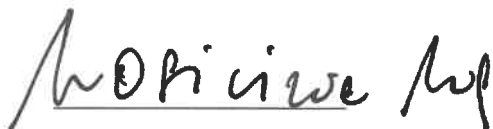
I believe that the principle involved is the application and limitations of freedom of speech, and the permissibility of members making racial inferences and remarks in relation to other members. This principle could be considered by the Rules Committee, whose deliberations should be duly informed by a prior consideration by the Subcommittee.

### **Opportunities for smaller parties to raise matters in the House**

Over time, certain parties have raised concerns about the perceived limited number of opportunities provided for them to raise matters in the House such as motions, statements and questions. On 20 April 2022, the Chief Whips' Forum agreed that the matter of the party sequence used to determine opportunities be discussed in the Rules Committee. Again, it would be necessary for this to first be discussed in the Subcommittee.

I would request that the Subcommittee consider these matters with due urgency.

Yours sincerely,



Ms N N Mapisa-Nqakula, MP

**Speaker of the National Assembly**

Date: 25 APRIL 2022